

Wards 2 and 3 Neighborhood Planning Assembly - NOTES



Thursday, July 11, 2024, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Join in person: ONE Community Center, 20 Allen St.

Join virtually: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85860854764>

Community dinner: 5:30-6:30pm | Dinner: Pizza, salad, and brownies

Moderator: Erika Faulkner **Notetaker:** Roxanne Meuse **Time Keeper:** Lauren Ebersol

Other Steering Committee members present: Chris Haessly, Michelle Borbas

Attendees: See last page

6:30 pm Introductions & Announcements | 5 min

6:35 pm Public Forum | 10 min (2 minutes max per person)

- Lauren Ebersol (poll worker): Ward 2 will vote at the ONE Community Center on August 13. And poll workers needed!
- Melo Grant (city councilor): Budget is done! Gave updates from the community safety group
- Sam (Ward 3 clerk): Needs people to help out at the polls! You get paid.
- Charlie Giannoni: Intervale just got flooded. Go to the [Intervale's website](#) to help volunteer or donate

6:45 pm Brief updates on CityPlace + how to learn more | 15 min

Jesse Robbins and Alyssa Dirks, Freeman French Freeman

Several project owners also present

Note: *These are technically two separate projects with different owners; they just both happen to have updates today, and FFF happened to be hired for both.*

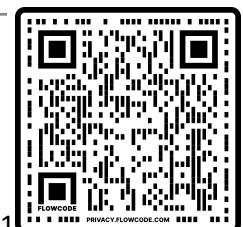
[CityPlace's website](#)

Phase 1B ("the pit" and Pine & St Paul Streets)

- [See presentation slides for Phase 1B](#)
- Changed brick colors
- Extended the top floor
- Adding balconies
- Total of 373 residential units across Phase 1. 75 are permanently affordable based on CEDO's definition.
- If questions or complaints, contact Dave Farrington
- If you or anyone you know is looking for employment, call us

Phase 2 (the LL Bean building & the Church St mall),

Use the QR code ([or click here](#)) to: [Email us](#) • Go to [our website](#) • Watch meeting recordings on [CCTV's website](#) • Connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) • Request a time slot with [CEDO's request form](#) • Get to all links related to this meeting



- [See presentation slides for Phase 2](#)

Jesse: Hoping to have more public forums, will coordinate with NPAs. Keep an eye out on Front Porch Forum.

Questions:

- Q: Why is Phase 2 only two floors?
 - Financing reasons
- Q: Aesthetic suggestion: Blocking colors on the “pit” building are probably going to look a little outdated soon
- Q: Theo (renter, union organizer): What tax breaks have you received? CUrious about the decision to increase the # of hotel units. Seems like putting profits over our lives.
 - We’ve received zero tax breaks
 - With the hotel, it’s like threading a needle. To keep number of housing units as high as possible, but needed the hotel to finance the whole building construction and sustaining.
 - And we also need tourism, so need hotels.
 - Added many hotel rooms, but did not remove many housing units
- Q: Lucy Gluck (Blodgett St): When will apartments be available?
 - First building: Occupancy next sprint
 - Second building: A year after that
- Q: Missa Aloisi (Strong St): Is there a plan for the future to build higher onto Phase 2 when there might be more financing?
 - We’re setting up the structure to allow for adding to it later.
- Q: Melo Grant: What is the mix of types of housing units?
 - Mix of studios, one bedrooms, 2-bedrooms. About 100 student housing beds in 30-something units.
 - Phase 2: Also a mix: studios to 4-bedrooms
- Q: Charlie Giannoni: What’s your report card for construction?
 - Dave: Thinks it’s pretty good since his phone isn’t buzzing all the time. We’re careful about coordinating with the school, trucks. Responsive to businesses and anyone calling.

Candidate Forums

7:00 pm Candidate forum | Vermont State House • Chittenden 17 District | 30 min

Candidates (for 1 seat): **Abbey Duke, Missa Aloisi**

Opening remarks:

- **Missa Aloisi:** Strong St Ward 2, 14 years there. Running because there needs to be more people like me representing us in the state house - queer parent of young kids. Small business owner. Low-income family (wife a paraeducator). Architect by profession. Works to make architecture affordable and accessible.
- **Abbey Duke:** Ward 7 in Village Green neighborhood. Burlington for 26 years - ONE before now. Has worked different careers, then opened SugarSnap Catering. Wants to bring the perspective of growing/building a business. Went through a lot of difficult years, including making payroll. Ingredients from the Intervale so climate change is high on her mind.

Question from Melo Grant: Can you address what you understand to be the public safety concerns right now? I've felt we've been abandoned by state government.

- Missa: Knows how overtaxed first responders are. needs to be a partnership between city and state. We're taking the burden/brunt of the work to address the mental health crisis and we need the funds.
- Abbey: It's clear the state hasn't put in enough resources. It's interconnected with multiple crises - homelessness, substance abuse, affordability.

Question from Lucy Gluck (Blodgett St, Ward 2): How do you feel about the F35s and would you raise that as an issue to get rid of them?

- Abbey: Short answer yes. Believes the guide should work to find another mission
- Missa: Likewise. IAA essentially shuts down when they're going over, so chunks of time when kids are not learning.

Question from Brandon (ONE): Affordability: State min wage is 13.66/hr. Do you think that's good, if not then what is?

- Missa: Should be liveable, not minimum. We've taken steps forward but it's not enough.
- Abbey: Affordability is a fundamental crisis in our city. Wages don't keep up to afford housing, childcare. it's criminal. Would support a higher one, but would need to look at data and analysis to know what.

Question from Nick Parish (Lafountain St Ward 2): Legislature passed Act 48(?) for universal healthcare but it didn't pass. Would you fight for this?

- Abbey: Absolutely believes in universal healthcare. There are some good events coming up. July 29 event is one of them
- Missa: Healthcare is a human right and it should be universal. Has been back and forth on/off Medicaid depending on profit. Need to expand Medicaid to cover working families in the middle zone. This is interconnected with other issues as well.

Question from Jonathan Chapple-Sokel (Ward 1): How will you leverage the power of 11 Burlington representatives to do something in the state house? Or to work on county solutions?

- Abbey: Grew up in county government. We have a lot of towns and school districts in VT and would like to see more collaboration between them.
- Missa: Grew up on a farm in rural Mass. Father is a Republican and grew up not supporting gay marriage, but now does. It's a long game of shifting values, to realize we're all much closer than we actually think. In the statehouse it's about building relationships and talking about how we're the same.

Question (missed name) (in VT Coalition for Palestinian Liberation): Where would you land on declaring Burlington and VT an apartheid-free state, and where you stand on divestment?

- Missa: Absolutely in support of all of that. Should be divesting from a lot of things, not just those participating in genocide. Fossil fuels too.
- Abbey: Would support creating criteria about what to divest from. Am pro-peace. Pro-Palestinian state. Tends to think we should keep international politics out of city politics - not sure if it's helpful.

Question from Hayden (Lafountain St Ward 2, clinical social worker): Curious on their ideas on addressing the designated agency (DA) system (like Howard Center is for Burlington) - it's falling apart.

- Abbey: Those folks are on the frontlines of the interconnecting crises. Fundamental reform is needed. Would support looking into this and listening to those on the frontlines.
- Missa: Has close family that's experienced homelessness. Having people getting paid minimum wage taking care of those in crisis isn't the way. We could bandaid but need to rework the system. If we had solutions, it'd ripple out too.

Question from Theo: Do you support rent control?

- Abbey: Yes. That said: There's a statewide law that doesn't allow municipalities to set rents. Would advocate to change that state law. A good model: the law for mobile home parks: If you want to raise the rent more than a set amount, you have to go to the state to ask permission. A rent review model like that could work.
- Missa: We live in a scarcity mindset. And the cost of construction is really high. Needs to be a win for both renter and developer. Rent control is a way. Could be based on looking at the longevity of a property, maybe property tax incentives for landlords who give a reduction in rent. Need to have a conversation and look holistically. How much profit do you need to make?

Closing remarks

- Abbey: Has taken part in a lot of public service - parks committee, businesses for social responsibility. Lobbied at the state house. Good at taking in information and filtering it. Looking at data, doing the research. Has two kids - incoming 9th and 11th graders at BHS - deeply committed to public schools.
- Missa: Has been working with Emma over the past couple years - bringing issues to Emma to bring to the statehouse. Has done some shadowing at the state house. National politics are scary and has fear about that, but feels local politics provides hope and a way forward. Her job as an architect is to ask what do you need and how can I help. It's about bringing people to the table.

7:35 pm Candidate forum | Vermont State Senate • Chittenden Central District | 50 min

Hear from the candidates for Vermont State Senate and ask questions about their positions and perspectives. **Candidates** (for 3 seats):

Phil Baruth, Martine Larocque Gulick, Stewart Ledbetter, Tanya Vyhovsky

Opening remarks:

- **Phil:** Has been senator for 14 years. Currently senate president pro tem. In January, half the senate will have 2 years or less in the senate - which is great, but institutional knowledge is dwindling. Wants to go back for 2 years to lead the senate through the rest of the generational change. | In this session, Gov Scott vetoed a historical amount, and the
- **Martine:** Has spent whole life in public service as educator, librarian, school board member. Vice Chair of Senate Education, and serves on Health and Welfare Committee.
- **Tanya:** Did one term in house before this recent term in the senate. Clinical social worker. Grew up in single parent working household. Learned that the systems don't work for families like hers. Needs representation in the system to change that. | Is one of 2 renters in the senate since can't afford to buy a home here. Wants to make a place where everyone can thrive.
- **Stewart:** Retired in February after a career in broadcast news and political journalism. Lives in Winooski. His career included covering the legislature. Housing is number one issue in our state. Healthcare is no better off. Ready to tackle all of them.

Nolan Rogers (North St Ward 3): 1) How many properties do you own? 2) What are the systematic issues you see that have gotten us to to the housing crisis

- **Martine:** One house. Has rented here and overseas before owning here so has that perspective. Overseas, it was more transparent, rules were more explicit, felt secure in housing. 70% of population in Germany rents. Systematic issues: Demographic trends have been happening for decades; is baffled the state legislature could have seen this and hasn't planned. We should be planning out 10, 20 years ahead. | We need more housing, affordable and missing middle.
- **Tanya:** Renter. It's also about the stagnant wages and profiteering. Short term rentals need to be regulated. A lot of second home ownership. Helped get people who had been evicted for no cause come to the state house and tell their story. Has also seen a great housing model in Vienna and been in touch with legislators there, plus in the US. Need paths to homeownership as well.
- **Stewart:** Owns one house. | There are only 22 houses in Chittenden County under \$450,000 right now. We're in a hole that's been building for years. We're an aging state and if our young people can't afford to stay here, who will fill the jobs and generate income tax revenue to keep the economy humming? We need to amp up supply of every sort: ADUs. And need to clamp down on out of state buyers buying houses to create short-term rentals. Open to just cause eviction.
- **Phil:** One house. | [Notetaker missed the first part] Act 250 has made Vermont what it is. But prevents more housing. Will look into Airbnb regulation next time.

Laura Soloman (Church St condo): 4 condos in her building are second homes that are empty most of the year. Since so many people can't get one house, what can we do about this?

- Tanya: We have two mechanisms of property tax: homestead and non-homestead. We've worked to use this, but it's a blunt instrument. Hawaii has 12 categories of property tax, so if we can do that here, we could bring more housing online.
- Stewart: 15% of our housing in VT is vacant much of the time. We're in a deep hole. Taxing second homes, regulating airbnbs, and more things will help.
- Phil: Short-term rental tech model: Disruptors are meant to break the system, not work within it. Airbnb doesn't care if they're pulling potential homes/rentals off the market. I've never seen a response like he's seen this year on data privacy, but the lobbyists poured into the statehouse. When we try to go after airbnb, that will happen again. So we need to build support in local groups, and be prepared to lobby in the state house.
- Martine: Don't have much to add. We need folks with political will to stand up and make hard decisions and I'm and my colleagues are here for it.

Nick Parish (Lafountain St Ward 2): Will you work for universal healthcare and make sure Act 48 is followed through.

- Stewart: Would love to see universal healthcare in Vermont. Would support medicare for all. Healthcare costs are soaring. There's a big conversation in Vermont about keeping our hospitals open.
- Phil: Dr Chau from Taiwan had come to the state and came up with a payroll tax of ~12%. And Peter Shumlin knew this would be the tax and didn't let it pass. In the wake of that, we need to work on paying for primary care.
- Martine: Yes. It's been fascinating/horrifying to be the clerk of the healthcare committee. The medical system is very broken and every day on that committee is a mind-blowing experience. But we passed great legislation this year: S98 (will give the Green Mountain Care board...), Pharmacy Benefit Manager Bill, requiring Medicaid to pay for doula services, and more.
- Tanya: Helped get Act 48 passed. Has personal experience in this system in this issue. Worked on expanding Dr Dinosaur, need to work with surrounding states, and 11% payroll tax sounds better than 15% increase every year in premiums. And this year they created the Universal Healthcare Caucus.

Jon Chapple-Sokol (Ward 1): UVM: What can the senate and house do to manage student numbers, relationship between city and university?

- Phil: Has taught at UVM for 30 years, member of the union. The university has hurt not helped this problem, though is building a new grad school housing. But has refused to negotiate with the city on a cap on enrollment or commitment to build units. They want to bring in students, but not pay to house them. | State house made it so when UVM came to the state house asking for money, they'd have to say how far they've come to address M/F parity on their board, and to have union members on it.
- Martine: Was disappointed to see the plans between UVM and City fell through. Seems we need to repair the relationship to do what's right by everybody. UVM needs to build more housing. What's happening is exacerbating our housing situation. Will do what she can in the senate.
- Tanya: The state doesn't actually give the university that much money. So taking that away might not help. General Assembly doesn't have much control over UVM's housing or student cap, but they do select members to board of trustees. so they could ask more questions on when they vet.

- Stewart: The tension between the city and uvm goes back a long ways. The City likes to say they can't compel their students to live on campus beyond sophomore year. Sense is that UVM would like to do the right thing if they can make the numbers work. It's a complicated thing.

Patrick Johnson (Green St): You can get charged an alarming amount of money per day for your car to be towed. There was a bill to work on that, what happened?

- Phil: There was a study to look at excess towing fees. Would be happy to sponsor that bill.
- Martine: Echoes that
- Tanya: Would also support the bill and cosponsor bill. Lobbyists.
- Stewart: Has also been victimized by

Closing statements + responding to Melo's question on addressing the substance abuse crisis.

- Stewart: Housing is #1 issue facing our state. So many social problems stem from that. Livability and healthcare next, and downtown Burlington. Burlington is facing twin social challenges of homelessness and addiction. Scott administration has got to do a better job supporting Burlington. Fourth issue is climate. Need to push for 100% renewable energy.
- Phil: Also wants to talk about gun safety. Has been a key issue going back 12 years. We've made progress. We won't be safe as a state unless we have a ban on assault weapons. Will be introducing a ban on assault weapons in January if reelected and will fight for it.
- Martine: Is asking what has the governor done to break the back of the opioid crisis. When those running say they want to work with the governor, what does that mean? Are you willing to break with what you believe in?
- Tanya: The long-term way to address substance abuse is to respond to despair. Needs to be full of choices. The criminal justice system is the worst place to help these folks. In the meantime, overdose prevention centers and housing.

8:35 pm Raffle prize + Adjourn!

Thank you for coming! Our next meeting is **Thursday, September 12.**

Attendees:

First Name	Last Name
Alexandre	Hankel
Carol	Wooster
Deb	Wien
Mason	Boninger
Jim	Quinn
AARON	KEEL
Jesse	Robbins
JUSTINE	HENNING
Meredith	Lupini
Noah	O'Leary
Brandon	Waxton
Rav	FRYER
NICK	Darrish
Nico	Halter
ANNA	KREMER
Catherine	Hornitz
Sally	Lee
Todd	Deluca
Iris	Johnson
Mary	O'rog
Sean	Melina
EMILY	ADAMS
NOLAN	ROBERTS
Melo	Graun
Jawad	NICKS
Andrew	Frost
Severus	Bart
Brian	Thompson
Bernard	Namponga
Cyril	Bakala

COMMUNITY DINNER & NF

First Name	Last Name
Yisroel	Rison
Roxanne	Meuse
TAM	DEWENTHALL
Sam	Powers
Nate	Delaney
WILLIAM	FELTON
Jessie	CHAPPLE-SCOTT
Lucy	Gluck
Sarah	Carpenter
Hayden	Bosua
Nick	Darrish
Jo	Memo Baker
Debra	Clemmer
Laura	Solomon
Danzel	Munteanu